



1325 CHINS INTAKE	
Chapter: Juvenile Justice Field Services	Section: Case Initiation
 <p>New Hampshire Division for Children, Youth and Families Policy Manual Policy Directive: 15-18 Effective Date: March 2015 Scheduled Review Date:</p>	<p>Approved:</p>  Lorraine Bartlett, DCYF Director
Related Statute(s): RSA 169-B , RSA 169-C , RSA 169-D , RSA 186 , RSA 189 , and RSA 193 Related Admin Rule(s): Related Federal Regulation(s):	Related Form(s): Bridges' Screen(s) and Attachment(s):

DCYF is committed to supporting children/youth and their families with dignity and in the least intrusive manner consistent with their needs. The ability to serve families without court intervention results in a less adversarial process through which children/youth and families may be supported and strengthened.

Purpose

This policy establishes the Central Intake Unit's responsibilities for the preliminary assessment of reports about Children in Need of Services (CHINS) and outlines the legal standards for requests of children/youth and families who are served without court intervention.

Definitions

"Child in Need of Services" or "CHINS" means a child/youth under the age of 18:

1. Who is subject to compulsory school attendance, and is habitually, willfully and without good and sufficient cause truant from school;
2. Who habitually runs away from home, or who repeatedly disregards the reasonable and lawful commands of his/her parent(s)/guardian, and places himself/herself or others in unsafe circumstances;
3. Who has exhibited willful repeated or habitual conduct constituting offenses which would be violations under the criminal code of this state if committed by an adult or, if committed by a person 16 years of age or older, would be violations under the motor vehicle code of this state; or
4. With a diagnosis of severe emotional, cognitive, or other mental health issues who engages in aggressive, fire setting, or sexualized behaviors that pose a danger to the child/youth or others and who is otherwise unable or ineligible to receive services under RSA 169-B or RSA 169-C; and
5. Is expressly found to be in need of care, guidance, counseling, discipline, supervision, treatment or rehabilitation.

"Contact" means a telephone call, oral information provided in person, or written information received by DCYF Central Intake regarding concerns about a child/youth and family.

"CPS" means the Bureau of Field Services' Child Protective Services under DCYF.

"CPSW" means a DCYF Child Protective Services Worker.

"DCYF" or the **"Division"** means the Department of Health and Human Services' Division for Children, Youth and Families.

"Guardian" means a parent or natural guardian, a guardian of a minor appointed under RSA 463 or the guardian of a child appointed by a court of competent jurisdiction in another state.

"JJS" means the Bureau of Field Services' Juvenile Justice Services under DCYF.

"JPPO" means a DCYF Juvenile Probation and Parole Officer.

"JPPS" means a DCYF Juvenile Probation and Parole Supervisor.

"Parent" means mother, father, stepparent, adoptive parent, but the term does not include a person to whom the parent-child relationship has been terminated by judicial decree or voluntary relinquishment.

"W-Case" means a Juvenile Justice Services case providing services on a voluntary basis without court intervention to a family and youth who have met the legal standard in RSA 169-D for a Child in Need of Services.

Policy

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| <p>I. All requests for CHINS Voluntary Services shall be referred to the DCYF Central Intake Unit via telephone.</p> <p>A. All requests for CHINS Voluntary Services shall be made by contacting the Central Intake Unit at 1-800-894-5533.</p> <p>B. A Central Intake CPSW shall be available during business hours, Monday - Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., to receive requests regarding CHINS.</p> <p>C. Requests for voluntary services may be made by a:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Parent or guardian for CHINS as defined in RSA 169-D:2, II(b)-(d);2. School district - school administrator, truant officer/school resource officer, guidance counselor, social worker, teacher, or special education director/coordinator, for CHINS as defined in RSA 169-D:2, II(a)-(d); and3. Local, county, or state law enforcement agencies within New Hampshire, for CHINS as defined in RSA 169-D:2, II(b)-(d). <p>D. Anonymous reports concerning CHINS shall not be accepted by the Central Intake Unit.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Any referring entity who refuses to allow disclosure will be advised that due to the nature of CHINS Voluntary Services and the role of the referring entity, the request for a CHINS Voluntary Services requires the disclosure of the referring entity. <p>E. School districts and law enforcement agencies making requests will be asked to provide any documentation available to show the reported behaviors and efforts made to resolve the concerns with the child/youth and family. In some instances the documentation will be necessary to have the request "screened-in" for assignment to a JPPO.</p> |
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- II. Central Intake will assess CHINS requests/referrals in the following ways, dependent on the circumstances.
- A. Referring entities who are seeking information on the process for CHINS Voluntary Services but do not wish to provide any information will be documented as a call for Information and Referral. Central Intake staff will provide information on resources to the best of their ability dependent on information shared by the referring entity.
 - B. Requests that do not meet the legal standard for CHINS Voluntary Services will be screened-out and maintained in Bridges for one year.
 - 1. The following persons are not eligible for CHINS Voluntary Services:
 - (a) Child/youth who have run away from home and whose whereabouts are unknown at the time of the CHINS Voluntary Services request; and
 - (b) Child/youth and families who do not reside in New Hampshire.
 - 2. Requests for CHINS when there is an open case for services under RSA 169-B or 169-C will be accepted as Additional Information and sent to the assigned field staff for review and response under the open case.
 - C. Requests that meet the CHINS legal standard for truancy, habitual runaways, or willful repeated conduct will result in Central Intake opening a W-Case in Bridges and referring it to the District Office to determine if the provision of CHINS Voluntary Services is appropriate.
 - 1. If Central Intake determines a request from a Law Enforcement Agency indicates that the runaway is a habitual runaway and in imminent danger, Central Intake will:
 - (a) Call the JPPS in the catchment area where the youth resides, that same day;
 - (b) Advise the JPPS that the request has been accepted; and
 - (c) Open a W-Case that is referred to the District Office for his/her review.
 - D. Requests that meet the CHINS legal standard for a child/youth with a severe mental health diagnosis who has engaged in dangerous behavior to self and others and are otherwise unable or ineligible to receive services under RSA 169-B or 169-C, require that:
 - 1. Central Intake call the JPPS in the catchment area where the child/youth resides, on the day of the request and advise the JPPS that the request has been accepted and referred to the District Office for his/her review; and
 - 2. Central Intake calls the Well-Being Bureau Administrator and provides him/her with the request information and the W-Case number.
- III. The legal standard for initiating a request for CHINS Voluntary Services will not be met if:
- A. The presenting concern relates to allegations of abuse/neglect;
 - B. The presenting concern is a delinquent act or adult misdemeanor/felony charge by a child/youth;

- C. There have been no efforts to engage the child/youth and family to resolve the concerns through community-based alternatives;
 - D. Placement of a child/youth is the only concern of the referring entity;
 - E. The child/youth or family's whereabouts are unknown; or
 - F. The family or child/youth already have an open case for abuse, neglect, CHINS, or delinquency with DCYF and/or the court.
- IV. The legal standard for initiating a request for CHINS Voluntary Services will be met when the following conditions are established:
- A. The child/youth meets the definition of a CHINS;
 - 1. A child/youth meets the legal standard of CHINS for truancy, defined under [RSA 189:35-a](#), when:
 - (a) The child/youth is at least 6 years of age and under 18 years of age at the time of the unexcused school absence ([RSA 193:1](#));
 - (b) The child/youth does not attend the public school to which he or she is assigned, or an approved private school or home education program during the times the school is in session;
 - (c) The child/youth has not been excused from attendance by the school district superintendent because the child/youth is physically or mentally unable to attend school;
 - (d) The child/youth has not been temporarily excused from attending at the request of his parent/guardian for purposes agreed upon by school authorities and the parent/guardian;
 - (e) The child/youth's unexcused absences are willful and habitual, in that they occurred deliberately on a regular basis;
 - (f) The child/youth's absences must be without good and sufficient cause; and
 - (g) The truancy officer and/or school official(s) have completed all steps of the schools process for intervention established under RSA 189:34, in collaboration with the child/youth's parent/guardian.
 - 2. A child/youth meets the legal standard of CHINS for habitually running away from home when:
 - (a) The child/youth leaves his/her home and fails to return to his/her home for an extended period of time considered unreasonable by the parent/guardian;
 - (b) The child/youth is away from his/her home without permission of his/her parent/guardian;

- (c) The child/youth habitually runs away, and has placed himself/herself or others in unsafe circumstances;
 - (d) The child/youth has run away and it is not a result of, or due to, abuse or neglect; and/or
 - (e) The parent/guardian has engaged law enforcement agencies in addressing the child/youth's runaway status, which may have included the child/youth's name being entered into the National Crime Information Center (NCIC) database so that the child/youth would be picked up if located.
- 3. A child/youth meets the legal standard of CHINS for disregarding the reasonable and lawful commands of his/her parent(s)/guardian when:
 - (a) The child/youth purposely does not heed reasonable and lawful commands of his/her parent/guardian;
 - (b) The child/youth's disregard of parental commands occurs repeatedly, in that it occurs on a regular basis; and
 - (c) The acts of disregard by the child/youth have placed him/her or others in unsafe circumstances.
- 4. The child/youth, 15 years of age or younger, meets the legal standard of CHINS for willful repeated or habitual offenses which would constitute violations under the following:
 - (a) New Hampshire's criminal code;
 - (b) Motor vehicle code;
 - (c) Aeronautics code;
 - (d) Fish and game code;
 - (e) Laws relating to navigation of boats;
 - (f) Fireworks laws; or
 - (g) An ordinance or bylaw of a city or town.
- 5. A child/youth meets the legal standard of CHINS when he or she:
 - (a) Is diagnosed with severe emotional, cognitive, or other mental health issues;
 - (b) Engages in aggressive, fire setting, or sexualized behaviors that pose a danger to the child/youth or others; and
 - (c) Is otherwise unable or ineligible to receive services under RSA 169-B or RSA 169-C.
- B. The child/youth and family's needs have been unable to be met through community-based alternatives in conjunction with the school district and/or law enforcement agency;

1. Requests by school officials must:
 - (a) Demonstrate how the legally liable school district has sought to resolve the concerns through available educational approaches and that the concern remains.
 - (b) If the child/youth is diagnosed with an educational disability, as defined by RSA 186-C, demonstrate that the legally liable school district has:
 - (1) Determined that the child/youth has an educational disability; and
 - (2) Reviewed the services contained in the child/youth's Individual Educational Plan (IEP) and made recommendations for the provision of education and educationally-related services to the child/youth.
 - (c) Be followed-up by written, supporting documentation from the school to be forwarded to DCYF.
 2. Requests by the child/youth's parent or guardian must include information which demonstrates how the family has attempted to resolve the expressed concern through available community alternatives and that the concerns still remain.
- V. Central Intake staff shall review the history of any identified child/youth and family in Bridges when a request is received.
- A. If the child/youth and family are found in the Bridges system, Central Intake will identify them in the request as existing clients.
 - B. Any prior cases (CPS or JJS) will be noted as a prior in the request.
- VI. When reports are received regarding situations requiring immediate response (e.g., child/youth is actively suicidal, severely intoxicated, or assaultive), Central Intake staff:
- A. Refers the referring entity to the local community mental health center, law enforcement agency, or parent/guardian; and
 - B. May contact the law enforcement agency.
- VII. Subsequent contacts received regarding a child/youth and family who are receiving CHINS Voluntary Services will be viewed as additional information unless the information presented would qualify as a report under RSA 169-C.
- A. The contact must be fully documented and classified by Central Intake staff in the same manner as a new contact.

Procedures

- I. The Central Intake CPSW receives and processes requests for CHINS Voluntary Services by:
 - A. Obtaining information necessary to screen the request with regards to the legal standard for CHINS Voluntary Services, including:
 1. The referring entity's name, address, and telephone number;

2. The names of the child/youth and family, their address, and phone number(s); and
 3. Accurate and complete factual information from the source about the situation under consideration, including:
 - (a) A description of the concerns;
 - (b) The family's strengths;
 - (c) Prior attempts to resolve the concerns and use of community resources; and
 - (d) Any other challenges considered relevant.
 4. Inquire if the child/youth, and family if applicable, are aware of the report being made and their willingness to participate in CHINS Voluntary Services.
- B. For requests that have not met the legal definition of a child under 18 years of age with diagnosis of severe emotional, cognitive, or other mental health issues who engages in aggressive, fire setting, or sexualized behaviors that pose a danger to the child/youth or others and who is otherwise unable or ineligible to receive services under RSA 169-B or RSA 169-C;
1. Central Intake will determine within 3 business days of the date of the initial request, whether the facts are consistent with the legal standard for CHINS Voluntary Services and should be referred to the District Office for further assessment of the appropriateness for a W-Case.
 2. If the information does not meet the legal standard to open CHINS Voluntary Services:
 - (a) Advises the referring entity that the information does not meet the legal standard for CHINS Voluntary Services, and:
 - (1) Refers the family to community-based agencies consistent with the family's needs; and/or
 - (2) Advises the caller to notify his/her local law enforcement agency as the information is indicative of a delinquency matter.
 - (b) Encourages the referring entity to follow through with the request to those agencies;
 - (c) Encourages the referring entity to contact DCYF again if the presenting issues continue or renew despite the family's efforts;
 - (d) Encourages the parent/guardian to utilize a journal or log to track information; and
 - (e) Completes and closes the request in Bridges as insufficient to meet the legal standard for CHINS Voluntary Services.
 3. If the information meets the legal standard to open a W-Case:

- (a) Open a W-Case in Bridges with the child/youth identified as an existing client. If there are multiple children/youth who meet the standard for CHINS, open a W-Case specific to each child/youth who meets the CHINS standard;
- (b) Identify any child/youth in the home as a household member and as "participating as child;"
- (c) Close the referral request and attach it to the W-Case as an Add Info;
- (d) Forward the W-Case to the Central Intake Supervisor for approval and assignment to the JJS office with jurisdiction; and
- (e) Forward any documentation received to the JJS office with jurisdiction.

II. The Central Intake Supervisor:

- A. Provides consultation to the intake CPSW regarding the request process and information;
- B. Reviews and approves all request screening decisions;
- C. May contact a CPS or JJS supervisor for a specific office if the circumstances present with intricacies that require insight from the specific office given program history and family rapport; and
- D. Forwards any opened W-Case to the District Office with jurisdiction.